

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS VISIT FINLAND

1. "THE BEST CHRISTMAS PRESENT THE U.S. COULD GIVE TO FINLAND"
IS THE WAY MINISTER OF EDUCATION MARJATTA VAANANEN DESCRIBED
THE EMBASSY'S LAST BICENTENNIAL PROJECT OF THE YEAR - THE
PROGRAMMING OF FOUR U.S. NOBEL LAUREATES AT THE UNIVERSITIES
OF HELSINKI AND TURKU DURING THE PERIOD DECEMBER 16 TO 23.

2. FIRST TO ARRIVE IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S INVITATION
WERE THE TWO LAUREATES IN PHYSICS, DR. SAMUEL C.C. TING AND
DR. BURTON RICHTER, WHO WERE RECEIVED WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM
BY FINNISH SCIENTISTS SINCE IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE
PHYSICISTS OF SUCH PROMINENCE HAVE COME TO FINLAND. THE
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI FEATURED THEM IN TWO LECTURES AT THE
INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS WHICH WERE ATTENDED BY A FULL HOUSE
AUDIENCE OF SOME 200 SCIENTISTS AND PHYSICS STUDENTS
FROM ALL OVER FINLAND. ALTHOUGH THEIR LECTURES ON "HEAVY
PHOTONS AND NEW PARTICLES OF MATTER", AND "ON NEW 100
GEV-100 GEV ELECTRON-POSITRON COLLIDING BEAM MACHINES" WERE
TECHNICAL, THEY RECEIVED WIDE PRESS COVERAGE DUE TO FINNISH
POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE POSSIBILITY THAT ONE OF THE BIG
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ACCELERATORS TO BE BUILT IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS THROUGH
INTERNATIONAL FINANCING OR AS A US-SOVIET PROJECT MIGHT BE
LOCATED IN FINLAND. OTHER PARTS OF THEIR PROGRAM INCLUDED A
JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE, A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE RECTOR OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI, A TOUR OF THE TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY TO DISCUSS FINNISH RESEARCH IN NUCLEAR ENERGY,

HUMAN BRAIN MEMORY SYSTEMS, AND LOW TEMPERATURE PROJECTS, AND A DINNER IN THEIR HONOR AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY TOP FINNISH POLITICAL AND ACADEMIC LEADERS INCLUDING THE CHAIRMEN OF THE CENTER AND LIBERAL PARTIES.

3. WHILE THE PHYSICISTS WERE STILL IN TOWN, THE MEDICAL LAUREATES DR. BARUCH S. BLUMBERG AND DR. CARLETON GAJDUSEK, THE LATTER ACCOMPANIED BY EIGHT ADOPTED SONS FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC, ARRIVED IN HELSINKI WHERE BOTH WERE VERY WELL KNOWN AND HAD MANY CONTACTS. DR. BLUMBERG HAS HAD VISITING FINNISH DOCTORS WORKING AT HIS INSTITUTE IN PHILADELPHIA FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS AND IS ON THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF A LEADING FINNISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, WHILE DR. GAJDUSEK'S INSTITUTION, NIH, HAS PROVIDED STUDY AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE IN THE U.S. FOR 75 PERCENT OF THE PROFESSORS ON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL FACULTIES IN FINLAND. THE MEDICAL LAUREATES PROGRAMS INCLUDED SEPARATE LECTURES AT THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI ON "UNCONVENTIONAL VIRUSES CAUSING CHRONIC SPORADIC, AND FAMILY DEGENERATIVE DISEASE", AND "THE AUSTRALIA ANTIGEN AND THE BIOLOGY OF HEPATITIS B", TO LARGE AUDIENCES OF DOCTORS AND MEDICAL RESEARCHERS, MANY INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH MEDICAL COLLEAGUES, A MAJOR PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WHICH INCLUDED A TELEVISION INTERVIEW, A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI AND A DINNER HOSTED BY THE AMBASSADOR ATTENDED BY THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND OTHER POLITICAL AND ACADEMIC LEADERS.

4. BOTH MEDICAL LAUREATES THEN TRAVELED TO TURKU ON SEPARATE UNCLASSIFIED

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DAYS FOR A SIMILAR PROGRAM OF PUBLIC LECTURES, PRESS CONFERENCES, LUNCHEONS WITH THE RECTOR AND COLLEAGUES, AND INFORMAL SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS. THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE VISITS AS THEY HAVE THE MOST OUTSTANDING DEPARTMENT OF VIROLOGY IN THE COUNTRY AND HAD BEEN ONE OF THE UNIVERSITIES WHICH RECOMMENDED DRS. GAJDUSEK AND BLUMBERG FOR THE NOBEL PRIZE.

5. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE NOBEL LAUREATES VISITS WAS THE HEAVIEST AND MOST WIDESPREAD OF ANY POST PROJECT IN THE LAST TWO YEARS AND INCLUDED MUCH OF THE HELPFUL BACKGROUND MATERIAL FROM IPS WHICH WE HAD DISTRIBUTED TO THEM. ALL THREE OF HELSINKI'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS AND MOST PROVINCIAL DAILIES CARRIED MANY COLUMNED REPORTS RANGING UP TO HALF A PAGE IN LENGTH WITH PICS FEATURING THE AMBASSADOR FLANKED BY THE NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS IN MEDICINE. VIRTURALLY ALL PAPERS ALSO GAVE CREDIT TO THE AMBASSADOR AND THE EMBASSY FOR MAKING THESE VISITS POSSIBLE.

6. BOTH THE NOBEL PRESENTATION CEREMONY IN STOCKHOLM WHICH WAS
WIDELY COVERED IN THE FINNISH MEDIA AND THE ENSURING VISIT OF
FOUR OF THE U.S. LAUREATES WERE A VERY FITTING CLIMAX TO THE
BICENTENNIAL YEAR AND SERVED TO FOCUS FINNISH PUBLIC
ATTENTION ON ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED AND ADMIRER ASPECTS
OF THE UNITED STATES. AS ONE PROMINENT HELSINKI PROFESSOR
REMARKED: "THIS IS THE BEST KIND OF PROPAGANDA FOR AMERICA
THAT THE EMBASSY CAN DO."
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